

Report of the Commission on Candidates for Holy Orders and Theological Education.

This report concludes with a series of important resolutions. The Commission hopes that it may be considered by deputies prior to the meeting of the Convention, in order that action may be had without the reading of the report on the floor.

Your Commission is increasingly convinced that there can be no adequate solution of the problems connected with the training and recruiting of the ministry save as the Church gains a clearer conception of just what its life and duty are and what its ministry is for, and save as its individual members attain a deeper consecration in discipleship. To bring this about all efforts of ours are, by themselves, unavailing: the Spirit of God must sway us with His own divine power. And the Spirit moves, like the wind, "where it listeth," and we "know not whence it cometh nor whither it goeth." Yet there are trades-winds, and the mariner seeking "the haven where he would be," may place himself in their known path and secure their powerful aid. So too, prayer and work are open to us, and prayer and work will bring us the divine aid we need. As yet we have scarcely begun to "pray the lord of the harvest that he would send forth laborers into his harvest;" nor have we really tested the promise "ask and ye shall receive." Here lies the root of our difficulty, and the final solution of our problem. Yet prayer is incomplete till it leads to action; and devoted action is itself a stimulus to prayer. And your Commission, in their final report, would plead earnestly not only for prayer, but for action—prompt, eager, wise action.

We therefore ask your careful consideration of the following suggestions, which we submit with only the comment that seems necessary to their intelligent discussion.

A. Recruiting.

In our report to the Convention a year ago we called attention to the grave situation in regard to the numbers and quality of

Inadequate Numbers men offering themselves for the work of the ministry. We shall not repeat the argument; but we feel impelled to summarize its main

headings. (1) Our communicants increased, in the quarter century ending with 1913, four times as rapidly as our clergy.

(2) In the diocese composing the Province of Washington fewer men were ordained in 1912 by 26.6 per cent than in 1890.

(3) The ratio of communicants to clergy in our Church has increased twice as fast as the average increase for seven other leading communions. (4) We have nearly twice as many

parishes and mission-stations as we have clergy to man them.

(5) Our recruits, to the extent of nearly 50 per cent, are drawn not from families of our own Church, but from those attached to other religious bodies. (6) In spite of the obvious value of

a college education to those who enter the ministry, that portion of our membership which could most easily provide its sons with this preparation, is yet furnishing far less than its proper proportion of recruits. (7) There is a total lack of any system or plan for the recruiting for the ministry.

To these grave facts must now be added yet another: the effect of the war. The first year of the war has reduced the

The War's Effect enrolment in our theological seminaries by nearly one-fourth—to be exact, by 23 per cent. It is a matter of patriotic pride to realize

that this percentage seems to be materially higher than that felt by any other communion. Were the falling off to stop here,

we might hold our peace. But as the draft, and the increasing appeal for volunteers, continue to affect us, the results will prove more serious—almost incredibly so. Careful estimates

make it probable that our twelve seminaries next year will have together not more than 138 students, as compared with their enrolment of 396 in 1916-17—a falling off of about 65 per cent;

while, should the war last, the enrolment in the year 1919-20 promises to be not more than 64—a falling off of 84 per cent.

These general estimates are confirmed by the concrete case of the Seminary in Philadelphia. Last year its enrolment, in the undergraduate department, was 43. This year it is 34. Next year the outlook is for 12 to 15 men. The fact that this condition is wholly due to a cause so evident and so abnormal as the war, of course robs the situation of all mystery, and therefore of no small measure of alarm. We can safely expect that with the removal of the cause, the effect will also disappear. Yet, in face of the grave condition that seems chronic, of a demand exceeding the supply of good men, even a temporary interruption in our recruiting is a matter of deep concern. It calls, at the least, for concerted action, that advantage may be taken of what, after all, is the greatest opportunity of our time.

Your Commission are deeply convinced that success in recruiting (in numbers and still more in quality) will come

Direct Personal Appeal Needed only as the Church acts deliberately upon a principle which hitherto has been far too much overlooked. *The right men must be deliberately sought out, and personally approached with the call to the ministry.*

In the past, we have trusted over much to men's *offering themselves, unsought and unurged*. We have counted upon their being "inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost" to take upon them "this office and ministration." We do not mean that there is not such a direct divine influence, nor do we mean that any man is truly fit for the ministry without this inward call. But God fulfills His purposes in this world, to a surprisingly large degree, through human agencies; and there is much which, apparently, He will do, and perhaps even *can* do, only through our co-operation. Is there any reason to suppose that His call to service in the ministry should be any the less subject to this law of His operation, through men upon men? Andrew found Simon, and Philip found Nathaniel; even the Master Himself did not wait for men to be "inwardly moved" to become His disciples—He sought them out, and called them. Here surely is our authoritative example. Often it is the very best of our young men who will most hesitate to consider themselves fit for this duty; and who perhaps most need the outward

voice of a fellow-man to confirm the first inward stirring of their hearts. It is our conviction, then, that we all, bishops, parish priests, parents and friends, must be God's agents in bringing the call to the ministry clearly before the most promising of the young men in our several circles, by direct and by personal methods. Only so shall we have the recruits we so greatly need, in quantity and quality. Hand-picked fruit is a choicer thing than wind-falls; and the analogy has points of exact pertinency here.

It is of great importance, moreover, that these deliberate efforts should be organized and made systematic, in order that individual action should have back of it the force of corporate purpose. Your Commission venture, therefore, upon the following concrete recommendations:

(1) **Boys and Men in School and College.**

There is an immense field for recruiting in our Church Boarding Schools and Colleges. It is a difficult and delicate field; and one where as yet we have no sure and adequate agency for any systematic efforts. Much is being done, however, to prepare the way, especially by the General Board of Religious Education. The Church ought to realize that this general agency is alive to the opportunity and is prevented from more effective action solely by lack of the means to put the right number of men in the field. If the Diocese of Pennsylvania would give generously for its support, the appeal would be made more thoroughly and made by experts. Something also can be done locally, and at once. We suggest that the Convention should request the Bishop of the Diocese, in its name, acting (if he so desire) with or through the Diocesan Board of Religious Education, or a special committee appointed by himself, to communicate with the Headmasters of all Church Schools within the Diocese, and with all special chaplains or parish clergy who are working among college or university students, urging them to take steps to come into personal touch with boys and young men belonging

to the Church and to lay before them the need of the ministry for recruits.

(2) **The Boys in our Parishes.**

For some years the Presbyterians have held annual dinners for boys of High School age. The session of each church selects its most promising boys for invitations, the minister and some of the members of the session go with these representative boys to the dinner, which gathers the boys of a number of contiguous churches. At the dinner the most effective speakers obtainable present the call to the ministry and to Christian service. The boys themselves are followed up individually after the dinner, not with any purpose of over-persuasion, but solely to insure that they shall weigh the call to the ministry and the mission field. The results have already been important. Your Commission is so persuaded of the value of this method of reaching boys, that it has, with the cordial approval of the Bishop of the Diocese, already arranged for two conferences, one of clergy and one of laymen, to consider the proposal, in order that the way might be prepared for such a boys' gathering this spring.* If the Convention approves this plan, we hope that it may promptly be carried through.

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(3) **Men in the National Service.**

Your Commission has ventured upon another step. It has asked the Bishop of the Diocese (and he has already acted) to communicate with all chaplains and volunteer workers (whether clergymen or laymen) who have gone out from this Diocese, to ask them to do two things: *first*, to follow up all young men in the ranks who are known as postulants or candidates, doing all in their power to keep these young men firm in their purpose ultimately to enter the ministry; and *second*, to seek out among the other young men with whom they are in contact,

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* The conference of clergy has been held at this writing, and has expressed cordial approval of the plan.

those of serious purpose, good gifts, and character, and to present to them the ministry as a field of service after the war is ended. More than this we see no means at the moment of accomplishing; but we hope that the general Church, perhaps through the General Board of Religious Education, may find it possible to send out a competent representative to our camps, whose business it shall be to pursue the two lines of effort just described.

(4) Older Men.

Your Commission is persuaded, for reasons which it may not linger to state, that there is a considerable number of older men, in professional or business life, who have felt

4. Older Men increasingly drawn to the work of the ministry, but who are hesitant because of the long years of intellectual training normally necessary, or because of the expense involved in that period of training, or simply because of the age they have reached. We are convinced that many of these men would prove competent and effective in all the usual work of the ministry. It is perhaps premature to urge the recruiting of such men as a *permanent* policy of the Church. But it seems eminently wise, in the present emergency, to take this step as a "war measure;" if it proves its worth, it may later win more stable recognition. We urge therefore: (1) that parish priests and others endeavor to seek out such men and bring them to the Bishop for his advice; (2) that the Bishop, the Standing Committee and the Examining Chaplains be asked, so far as the present Canons will properly permit, to arrange for a less exacting and technical test of intellectual fitness on the part of such men of established character and mature years (30 or over); and (3) that theological seminaries be urged if possible to offer courses specially fitted for these men and, where needed, special financial assistance. We call attention to the fact that one of the dioceses of this state has, we are informed, already undertaken a "drive" for older recruits, with such success that the numbers obtained promise almost if not quite to bring its list of postulants and candidates up to the normal pre-bellum figure.

(5) **Parochial Scholarships for Students.**

In the Diocese of New York, the Diocesan Board of Religious Education has arranged with certain parishes to offer annual scholarships, of \$250 each, to college students who are studying with the view ultimately of Church service. In return for these scholarships the students give stated hours to the parish in its Sunday School or organization work. The New York plan is intended primarily for those who look forward to Christian work as laymen and women. But the plan could be equally well adapted to students who are beyond the university stage, and already at seminaries or deaconess schools. Indeed, it would, in some measure, be but the extension and systematization of an arrangement already privately made in many cases. We ask the Convention to refer this suggestion, with a general expression of approval, to our Diocesan Board of Religious Education, for their consideration.

5. Parish Scholarships

B. Practical Training for the Ministry.

Your Commission can point to no school or seminary where really adequate provision is made for the *practical* training of its students for the ministry. We believe this condition of things is one, the seriousness of which has not been at all adequately realized by the Church. So long as the *training* of the minister remains overwhelmingly academic, theoretical and intellectual, while the *work* he steps into after training is prevailingly active, concrete and practical, there cannot but be a "great gulf fixed" between the two. The results are unfortunate, alike to the training itself, and to the work; unfortunate for the seminary, for the student, and for the Church. This shows itself in a number of ways. For, *first*, the student himself is occasionally so deeply mastered and molded by his academic training that he loses much of that eager passion for the service of souls which should have been a chief feature of his "inward call;" and where this is the case his whole *after ministry* is likely to prove cold and theoretic, and out of touch

Lack of

Practical Training

with actual needs. *Second*, more frequently the student, feeling the lack of purposeful and obvious co-ordination between the seminary training and the work of the ministry, comes to think of the former as a useless barrier, set up for no good purpose; he looks only for the moment of his release which cannot come too soon; and so he is in no frame of mind to profit fully either from the direct teaching or the discipline of the seminary. *Third*, the Church suffers in that it has thrust upon it, for leadership in practical work, men who have had no properly guided instruction in the actual needs of human beings, or in the methods of service and influence which will effectually reach and help them. *Finally*, the student, through sheer financial necessity, must now usually undertake lay-reading work, so-called, during his seminary course. This means, generally, the entire and responsible care of some small mission or congregation, where the lay-reader is virtually a law unto himself. Thus he begins his work of preaching and pastoral ministration, before he has received even that modicum of practical training which the seminary offers; he carries it on without oversight, criticism or guidance; he finds his sermon preparation crowded into odd moments by the demands of his academic life; and the result in too many cases is the formation of bad habits of carelessness and haste which not infrequently affect all his later ministry. It is not the least important feature of this vicious system that the candidate, in the very days when his ideas should be most pure and lofty, is forced by mere financial need, to look for the job that pays most money, and to undertake it whether he is really competent for it or not. If the Church could see what belongs to its true peace and prosperity, it would sweep away this whole abominable system; and would see to it (as the government does with its cadets at West Point, its midshipmen at Annapolis, and its officers and enlisted men in camps and cantonments), that a living allowance was forthcoming for every promising student in our seminaries; and demand that every student should spend the time, now spent in earning the pitiful fees of a lay-reader, in practical work under wise teachers and guides.

The possibilities for practical training under expert guidance are many. To your Commission it would seem advisable that

*What Might
Be Done*

students for the ministry should ordinarily give their time during their first, or Junior, year to Sunday School work. This might readily be, if the professor of religious education in a seminary and the students of the Junior Class could afford to offer themselves as superintendent and staff of teachers for some parish or mission Sunday School, and make it thus a genuine opportunity for learning the art of effective religious teaching. Students of the upper classes might readily be placed under chosen rectors, or under the City Mission, etc. And if those chosen as practical instructors could at the same time have some definite connection with the authorities and especially the faculty of the seminaries, there could hardly fail to be results of the deepest and most lasting value, alike for the students, the seminary and the Church. Your Commission venture to commend this suggestion strongly to the authorities of our local seminary, and of the City Mission; and no less strongly do they remind the members of the Convention and churchmen of the Diocese in general, that the sole serious obstacle (so far as they can see) to a reform of such immense importance, lies in the fact that it would cost the Church something like two or three hundred dollars a year per student, or some six to nine hundred dollars, for each student educated, for his whole course. It is sometimes said that our seminary education is a very extravagant proposition, because there are few students in each school. Your Commission are convinced that the average cost per year for the education of our ministers-to-be is, as an actual fact, not more than, and is probably even less than, the average cost per student in college or professional school. But after all, the criterion, the only really applicable criterion, is not that of how many dollars and cents this education costs, but whether it produces the effective ministers we want. It is our contention that the Church is penny-wise at present, and consequently pound-foolish; and that the great and crying need is not for teaching that is more economical of money, but for teaching

that is more economical of men and more effective for its vital and all-important ends.

C. Financial Support.

We are not ready to make any definite financial recommendations. We are indeed convinced that here, as in so many other matters, the material features of the situation can be disregarded only at our extreme peril.

*Dollars and
Cents*

In our report last year, we called your attention to the almost incredible facts—that the Church generally is attempting to run its whole scheme for the recruiting and training of men for the ministry without any well-designed method or policy for its financing, and as a matter of fact without any income for much of it, and with no real effort to increase the funds given by past generations so that they may be adequate to the expanding needs of the present. This Diocese, for example, at the close of the civil war, so we pointed out, was giving a yearly average of over \$30,000 for Christian and Theological Education; while for the five years then last past, the average gift (omitting the proceeds of an endowment) had been less than \$1200. In the meantime, the Roman Catholic Church shows us what is possible. Its churches of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, lying within the limits of the city proper, gave, a year ago, some \$70,595.76 for the seminary at Overbrook; this year, spite of the war, they gave \$79,173.39, an increase of more than 12 per cent. So long as we lag behind in this evident responsibility, it will continue impossible for our Church to provide adequately for its students for the ministry, or for our seminaries to improve and modernize their work. Yet if it be possible for the Roman Catholics of Philadelphia to give \$79,000 a year for theological education, it ought to be easy for this diocese of ours to secure \$10,000. Of course it is plainly impracticable for the Diocese to undertake to raise money directly for the needs of any theological seminary. But why should it not raise the comparatively small sum necessary to finance the practical training of students, which could be undertaken by our own City Mission, or by parishes?

We have no other suggestion on this point however, than that a small committee of laymen should be appointed by the President of the Convention, and instructed to take this whole important question under advisement, and to report to the Convention of 1919.

D. Spiritual Training.

We reserve for this final section of our report proper the matter of the spiritual training of men for the ministry.

Spiritual Training

Rightly understood, this is the most fundamental and important of all the questions we have considered, and, we venture to add, the most difficult. Obviously, the Commission as such has little to do with this matter, on the side of direct application or practice; nor indeed has the Convention. But the results and effects of the training, or lack of training, which our candidates receive does concern us all intimately and immediately. Moreover, in a field confessedly so difficult, it is hardly too much to suppose that any general or specific advice we can give will be gladly weighed by those most concerned. In the circumstances, your Commission believe that the best service they can render in this connection is to print entire, as an appendix to this report, the report of their sub-committee on the subject; simply premising that suggestive and careful as this document is, it by no means indicates how fully this whole matter was considered by us, or how large a portion of our time was given to its discussion. In addition to the general suggestions advanced in the sub-committee's report, we desire to submit, in its proper place, among the resolutions we offer to the Convention, certain resolutions bearing upon this subject.

E. Resolutions.

The Commission offer the following resolutions:

1. *Resolved*, That the Bishop of the Diocese be asked to consider the advisability of issuing special prayers for the increase of the ministry, which may be used in private or in public worship.

2. *Resolved*, That this Convention earnestly calls the attention of the clergy and laity, and not least of the parents in the Diocese, to the need of recruits for the ministry, and to the importance of direct personal efforts to secure them.

3. *Resolved*, That this Convention requests the Bishop of the Diocese, acting himself, or by such agency as he may deem best, to urge the headmasters of church schools, and the special chaplains and parochial clergy who may be working among college and university students, to present the call to the ministry, especially by personal interviews with selected men.

4. *Resolved*, That this Convention approves the steps already taken by the Commission in regard to recruiting, and the further projects outlined in this report; and that it requests the Bishop of the Diocese to appoint a committee of three clergymen and three laymen, to be known as the Committee on Recruiting, whose duty it shall be to carry out so much as possible of these suggestions, and in other ways, at their discretion, subject always to the approval of the Bishop, to further recruiting in the Diocese.

5. *Resolved*, That this Convention approves the suggestion of the Commission in regard to recruiting among men of more mature years; that it urges parish priests and others to seek out such men; that it asks the Bishop, the Standing Committee and the Examining Chaplains, so far as possible under the present Canons of General Convention, to admit such men without exacting the full technical intellectual requirements usual in this Diocese; and that it urges the theological seminaries to provide special preparation for such men and if possible special financial assistance where needed.

6. *Resolved*, That the matter of parochial scholarships, as described in this report, be commended to the Diocesan Board of Religious Education for consideration.

7. *Resolved*, That this Convention heartily approves the suggestions of the Commission in regard to the *practical* training of men for the ministry, and expresses its earnest hope that co-operative arrangements to this end may prove practicable, and that the financial support necessary for their inauguration may be forthcoming.

8. *Resolved*, That a special committee of five laymen be appointed to consider the whole matter of the responsibility of the Church in this Diocese for the financial support of theological education, this committee to report to the next Convention.

9. *Resolved*, That in view of the need of definite and systematic provision for the spiritual training of Candidates for Holy Orders, this Convention (1) requests the Bishop of the Diocese to consider the advisability of placing postulants and candidates, especially during the period preceding their seminary course, under the immediate pastoral care of an official, who, with the Bishop's direction, shall be responsible for their spiritual guidance, training and testing; and (2) urges that larger opportunity be offered in the courses of study in our seminaries for attaining familiarity with the spiritual experience of the past by the study of the literature of the subject.

10. *Resolved*, That this Convention approves the publication in pamphlet form of such parts of the material gathered by the Commission during its work, as may seem to the Commission of permanent value,—provided the same can be done without expense to the Convention.

11. *Resolved*, That 2500 copies of this report be printed and a copy sent to each clergyman and vestryman of the Diocese, with request, in the name of the Convention, that the report be read to each congregation in place of the sermon at a Sunday morning service; and be it further *Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Convention send a copy of this resolution with the report to each clergyman and vestryman.

12. *Resolved*, That the Commission be continued, and instructed (1) to co-operate in all ways within its power for the furtherance of the suggestions and recommendations advanced in this report, and (2) to report progress to the Convention of 1919.

Respectfully submitted, for the Commission.

GEORGE G. BARTLETT, *Chairman*.

ROLAND G. KENT, *Secretary*.

April 16, 1918.

APPENDIX.

Report of the Sub-Committee.

SPIRITUAL TRAINING OF CANDIDATES FOR HOLY ORDERS

The Sub-committee on the Spiritual Training of Candidates for Holy Orders desires to report that material on this subject had been gathered with the kind co-operation of the Deans of the General Seminary and Philadelphia Divinity School, the Bishop of Milwaukee, and several young men, either candidates for Holy Orders or recently ordained.

The general opinion of all those who have been consulted may be summed up in the remark which Dean Fosbroke makes: "The one thing that it seems perfectly safe to say about the Spiritual Training of Candidates for Holy Orders is that we are by no means doing enough."

A student of one of the other seminaries expresses the feeling of the group which he represents, in these words: "I feel the need for some definite program for the spiritual life."

Your Committee feels constrained to say, in the first place, that the Spiritual Preparation of Candidates for Holy Orders ought to be begun a long time before they become candidates. Our problem reaches back into home life, into Sunday Schools and Confirmation classes, and Brotherhood Chapters, and all the other influences through which a young man passes before he comes to the point where he decides to study for the ministry.

The remark was made recently by a man of long experience in dealing with Divinity students: That what they seemed to him to need most was religion; to which another responded that nine-tenths of the candidates for Holy Orders whom he knew need to be converted.

It is unnecessary to take too seriously these offhand and sweeping generalizations, yet it is doubtless true that many men become postulants and candidates for Holy Orders without ever having had any spiritual experience of a deep and moving sort, and with only a superficial and fragmentary knowledge of what the spiritual opportunities of the Church and its system really are. They often lack any sense of corporate life or of the value of regularity and system in spiritual exercises. They do not know how to discipline themselves, and they submit with very ill grace to discipline imposed by others.

It seems to be the case also that Rectors of parishes, even when they feel an obligation to bring men to the point of offering themselves as candidates for the ministry, are quite generally in the habit of washing their hands of responsibility for them after the step has been taken. It

seems to be assumed that when a man has decided to study for Holy Orders, he has passed into a separate stratum of Church life, and no longer needs pastoral care or even friendly counsel. With few exceptions, the men who enter our seminaries are left severely alone by the Rectors of the parishes from which they come. This surely is a mistake, for these young men need more, rather than less, care and guidance than before,—the constant and sympathetic shepherding of a faithful pastor.

It is difficult to state the sphere of Spiritual Training, just as the term "spiritual" itself has a somewhat vague significance; but it might be distinguished from intellectual culture so as to include the cultivation of habits of prayer, meditation, the searching of conscience, the devotional use of Holy Scripture,—in a word, the effort to make the man a better Christian by giving him a clearer vision of God and showing him how to carry out St. Paul's advice to Timothy, "Exercise thyself unto godliness."

Such training would include three elements:

(1) The element of instruction in the profitable use of the Church Services, including not only preparation for the Holy Communion but appreciation of the value of the Daily Offices and other Chapel Services; and a deeper sense of the necessity of corporate prayer and of intercession.

(2) There should be a familiarity with the spiritual experience of the past; a quickening of faith in the reality of the spiritual world by an acquaintance with the literature of the subject. This might be done by a special course dealing with:

- (A) The conception of the "Fruits of the Spirit in the Early Church;"
- (B) The relation of this experience to the Sacraments;
- (C) Methods for the cultivation of the spiritual life; the ascetic and monastic developments; systematic mysticism, quietism, etc.

(3) It seems to be a necessity that more systematic provision for pastoral care should be made. Naturally the Deans and professors of our seminaries do exercise such care, often with deep and conscientious interest and real effectiveness; but the Dean of a Seminary is hampered by the fact that he is a disciplinary officer, the professors by lack of time and of any specific commission for the cure of souls. Whether it will be possible to have a priest assigned definitely to this duty of pastoral care in each seminary (perhaps some one from outside the Faculty, a man in parochial work) or whether each diocese should have an official appointed by the Bishop, to be responsible for the oversight of candidates for Holy Orders—as is done, we are informed, in the Diocese of Washington—your Committee does not feel qualified to determine; but certainly many young men pass through the period of their candidacy without (as one of them has already been quoted as saying) "a definite program for the spiritual life," and often amid the perplexities of serious moral problems, who would be greatly

helped if they could have the guidance and counsel of a pastor whose special duty it was to win their confidence, train them to use means of grace, and give frequent opportunities for personal conference.

Your Committee does not mean to ignore the existence of some—perhaps of all—of these agencies in our seminaries at the present time. In all of them are Quiet Days, Retreats, and courses in subjects that bear on spiritual culture; and an earnest effort is made to improve these parts of the seminary training. What your Committee would urge is the reinforcement of the present agencies, and the systematic recognition by the Church of the need of Spiritual Training as an essential part of preparation for Holy Orders; not to be left to the interest or discretion of this or that individual, but provided according to a definite and carefully related plan.

GEORGE L. RICHARDSON,
W. ROMAIN NEWBOLD,
SAMUEL B. BOOTH.